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Chairman: Mr. DA COSTA LOBO (Portugal)
(Vice-Chairman)

later: Mr. JAROSZEK (Poland)
(Chairman)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

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INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE (A/31/20; A/C.1/31/3)

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Mr. IDRIS (Indonesia): It gives my delegation great pleasure that Mr. Taroszek is serving as Chairman during our deliberations. We are confident that, under his able leadership, the deliberations of the Committee will produce fruitful results. We should also like to take this opportunity to congratulate the other officers of the Committee on their election and to pledge our co-operation with the Bureau in the work of the current session.

The past year has seen many outstanding events which have underlined the importance of the peaceful uses of outer space. Of particular significance were the landings of Viking I and Viking II on Mars; these were truly epoch-making events in the history of man's exploration of space. From the findings already transmitted, more has been learned about Mars than in all previous history. Our commendations go to the United States scientists and engineers for another significant and historic achievement.

Likewise, our congratulations go to the Soviet Union as their astronauts carry out a series of manned flights involving both man's ability to function in outer space and observations of the earth's surface.

In this context, I should like to inform the Committee of the orbiting of Indonesia's first domestic satellite, named PALAPA, on 8 July 1976. This was a significant development, since Indonesia became the first developing nation, and the fourth nation in the world, to have orbited a domestic satellite communication system. Indonesia chose a satellite communications system because of the tremendous problems to be overcome in establishing communication links among its thousands of islands by conventional means.

(Mr. Idris, Indonesia)

The craft already launched and a twin scheduled for launching next year will link a number of earth stations and telephone and television centres in the Indonesian archipelago and thus pave the way for an audio-visual communications infrastructure. Through PERUMTEL, the Indonesian telecommunications agency, service began through the PALAPA on 17 August, the thirty-first anniversary of Indonesian independence. Since the inauguration of the domestic satellite communications system, Indonesia has considerably improved its communications system both in quality and in scope. This is reflected, for instance, in the considerable increase that has taken place in long-distance calls and in calls from Jakarta to the outer regions and vice versa and in the fact that television broadcasts from Jakarta were able to be received in various parts of the country. In addition, plans for the building of an earth satellite station in East Timor have already reached an advanced stage. All of these developments have brought the people of Indonesia, who are spread over thousands of islands, closer and thus strengthened the bonds of unity.

In another sphere, Indonesia has embarked upon a national resource survey and mapping project which is expected to make a major contribution to the Indonesian economy. The lack of adequate resource data has become an increasingly important constraint on effective national and regional planning in Indonesia and on the rate of preparation and implementation of projects. Efforts to evaluate and map the topography, soils, hydrology, forests and other resources have been seriously hindered by the absence of up-to-date maps, aerial photography and geodetic control. The project provides for the establishment of a national resource survey and mapping capability as well as technical assistance and training in related fields. In addition, there will be a programme of mapping and resource-survey operations to be implemented by BAKOSURTANAL, the National Co-ordinating Agency for Surveys and Mapping, and a complementary programme of technical services. Finally, the project will improve the effectiveness of economic planning at all levels of Government by means of an expanded body of resource data derived from aerial photography, satellite imagery and field surveys.

From Indonesia's limited experience in earth-oriented space technology applications, it is clear that practical space applications alone hold out almost

(Mr. Idris, Indonesia)

limitless opportunities for solving priority problems of development. The areas offering particular opportunities to developing countries are the use of satellites for communications, remote-sensing systems to provide more accurate and comprehensive surveys of the earth, a better control of environmental and ecological conditions and the monitoring of agricultural resources and productivity.

As the Expert on Space Applications has noted in his cogent and thoughtful report in document A/AC.105/163, a number of developing countries have already gained awareness of benefits in many areas and the emphasis in United Nations efforts should now be on training and technical assistance programmes which will respond more effectively to the needs of the developing countries. For instance, the United Nations could play an important role in disseminating knowledge of remote-sensing technology and in moving from the experimental to the operational phase. Such a programme, among others, would enable the developing countries to participate meaningfully in space activities and reap their benefits. It is for these reasons that my delegation attaches importance to the feasibility study prepared by the Secretariat on a possible co-ordinating function for the United Nations in future operational activities and, possibly, also in the current experimental stage of remote sensing, including the possibility of establishing a panel of experts on remote sensing.

I shall now turn to three other priority items: the moon treaty, satellite broadcasting and remote sensing.

As regards the moon treaty, Indonesia's basic position remains unchanged -- namely, the moon and its resources should be recognized as the common heritage of mankind. In a spirit of co-operation and compromise and in order to achieve an agreed formula for an international space order, Indonesia was a co-sponsor of a working paper submitted to the Legal Sub-Committee containing proposals which, if adopted, would establish an international régime to ensure an equitable sharing in the benefits to be derived from any resources which may be discovered on the moon. By providing for the orderly and safe development of these resources, as well as their rational management, the proposal seeks to meet the needs of the developing countries. Prior to the establishment of such a régime, States parties undertake to refrain from acting in a manner incompatible with the above-mentioned

(Mr. Idris, Indonesia)

provisions. In addition, they will promptly inform the Secretary-General of any discovery of natural resources as well as any other activities on the moon. My delegation commends these proposals for the serious consideration of the Committee and is prepared to co-operate with all efforts to overcome the obstacles to the conclusion of the moon treaty.

The progress achieved in the formulation of principles governing direct broadcasting by satellites was most encouraging and, it is to be hoped, will facilitate further progress in the difficult areas of consent and participation, as well as programme content. Even here, the progress achieved so far would appear to suggest that the legal principle of the sovereign rights of States need not frustrate the political concept of free flow of information. If freedom of information could be within the framework of international co-operation and understanding, and consent could be construed as an exercise of sovereign rights to be protected against possible dissemination of information that might have an undesirable impact on the political, social and cultural life of the receiving countries, then it is possible to find some acceptable formulations to reflect those concerns. Perhaps a solution to the problem lies in principles which would provide for consent and participation.

As regards remote sensing, Indonesia, as I already emphasized, considers this aspect of space technology to be significant, not only as a means of achieving a comprehensive inventory of the country's natural resources but also as a potentially effective tool in enhancing economic development. On an issue of such importance, it is essential that some form of regulation to govern the dissemination of data should be found to ensure that the further application of remote sensing does not interfere with the economic security of developing countries, particularly as regards the exploitation of their natural resources.

(Mr. Idris, Indonesia)

It is the view of my delegation that remote sensing should be conducted in the interests of the sensed country, which alone should receive all data collected about its natural resources. Sensing States should be under an obligation to inform the sensed States of their activities. Data should not be disseminated indiscriminately but only in agreement with the Government of the sensed State. In that way any third country desiring access to those data would have to apply to the Government of the sensed State. For all of these reasons, Indonesia is strongly in favour of a treaty governing the dissemination of information by means of remote sensing technology.

Indonesia also attaches great importance to the organizational framework for remote sensing and is of the view that the United Nations should have some role in whatever future arrangements are made in the field of remote sensing of the earth. We wish to see an identifiable United Nations element whether as a focal point or as a co-ordinating mechanism for future remote sensing systems, as these will ensure technical co-operation in training to enable the developing countries to have full access to space technology.

In conclusion, I wish to say that the benefits from the peaceful uses of outer space to which I referred earlier have justified the efforts made in that area. Developing countries have ample scope for the use of space technology to enable them to make the appropriate decisions and plans for their future. International co-operation should be the touchstone for the promotion and development of peaceful space activities and the problem of making the benefits of space technology available to all mankind. It is in this context that a significant strengthening of the role of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space should be considered.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Indonesia for the congratulations and kind words he has addressed to the Chairman and the officers of this Committee.

Mr. ZEA (Colombia) (interpretation from Spanish): On behalf of the delegation of Colombia, may I convey to you, Mr. Chairman, our most heartfelt congratulations upon your election as Chairman of this Committee. I associate myself with the well deserved words of praise of your outstanding personal qualities and qualifications spoken by previous speakers. I also extend these congratulations to the distinguished representatives who were so justly acclaimed as Vice-Chairman and Rapporteur respectively. With such able officers the efficiency of our Committee's work is ensured.

May I also, on behalf of my delegation, express our gratitude to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space for the very interesting work it has been carrying out and for the comprehensive and very important report submitted to us here by its Chairman, Ambassador Jankowitsch of Austria.

I should like more particularly to make some remarks concerning the important functions of the Legal Sub-Committee and at the same time voice some misgivings in that respect. We are, in fact, concerned that the work is not moving forward at the required speed which present circumstances urgently require. In fact, the formulation of juridical regulations governing the unchecked progress in the use of outer space, covering as far as possible all activities, beginning with a clear definition of outer space, brooks no delay. As long as we do not know exactly what outer space encompasses and what we should understand by outer space, it will be extremely difficult to define or indicate the rights of States and the international community as such as regards the utilization of its enormous resources. We know that this is an arduous task, but these are very new topics and we have no antecedents for them in the cultural development of the human species and must create the laws that must govern them. But the truth is, that we are being overtaken by events and by the progress of science and that we must make every effort to face the facts of today and whatever fate has in store for us.

My country, for instance, is profoundly interested in the recognition of the geostationary orbital segments coming under the sovereignty of countries situated on the equator. In the general debate in the General Assembly at its thirtieth session, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia expressed that concern in the following terms:

(Mr. Zea, Colombia)

"The same can be said of another scarce natural resource having exceptional, unique characteristics: and that is the earth-synchronized stationary orbit of satellites.

"We can no longer postpone a legal definition of outer space and of earth-space communications, because past experience and foreseeable developments in the next few years highlight the notorious lacunas in existing Conventions on the peaceful exploration and use of outer space. Those Conventions did not take into account its exploitation for gain, or the legal and physically immutable existence of segments of that earth orbit permanently placed within the territorial skies of various equatorial countries which are Members of the United Nations, as is the case with Colombia, which is situated between approximately 70 and 75 degrees west of Greenwich.

(Mr. Zea, Colombia)

"Since the time is drawing near when in due course we shall see the 'use or occupation' of such positions by commercial enterprises wishing to place such 'fixed radio communications stations' within the territory of sovereign countries, the Government of Colombia considers it urgent to regulate the assignment of sites for fixed satellites, because it might very well happen that individuals or legal entities would claim a sui generis kind of 'private sovereignty' within sovereign countries, which is unacceptable to the latter.

"Colombia does not object to free orbital transit or to communications requiring the devices envisaged and authorized by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), as long as those devices ply the territorial sky in a gravitational flight, from any practical height to infinity. But a clear exception is to be made in the case of devices which are to be fixed on a segment of their stationary orbit, because we consider that segment as one of our 'natural resources' -- a resource which has always been part of the third dimension of our full sovereignty." (A/PV.2376, p. 42)

These views were reiterated by Colombia in the general debate in the General Assembly at the current session, and my delegation also made a clear presentation of its position in the debate in this Committee last year on the subject now before us. It is our understanding that the geostationary orbit in which it is possible to place synchronic earth satellites, although it may be regarded physically as a part of outer space, requires special juridical treatment. Whereas there is still no definition of outer space, the geostationary orbit is duly limited by inexorable physical laws and is well known in contemporary science. My delegation has not the slightest doubt that the orbit which crosses space at 35,871 km altitude over the surface of the earth generates a natural resource which belongs as an extension of earth sovereignty to the countries located on the equator.

Last year in this Committee my delegation expressed the view that these segments of the orbit for geostationary satellites were not encompassed in the concept of outer space dealt with in the Treaty on Principles to Govern the Activities of States in the Exploration and Exploitation of Outer Space including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, signed in January 1967 under the aegis of the United Nations. That treaty, as we know, accepted the principle of res communis for outer space in order to avoid its appropriation by any State. However, by its

(Mr. Zea, Colombia)

very nature the use of geostationary satellites entails the permanent occupation of points on the orbital segments -- an occupation that will lead to claims of sovereignty which would obviously be unacceptable -- all the more so since the commercial exploitation of satellites could well be in the hands of national or multinational private enterprises. Since the orbital segment is a natural resource of the nations over which it is situated, and subject to their sovereignty, those States did not relinquish their rights over that geophysical zone in the 1967 treaty.

For the foregoing reasons, my delegation again requests that, in the international legislation to be drawn up on the juridical principles to govern the use of the geostationary orbit and of outer space, there be a clear recognition of the sui generis character of that orbit and an unequivocal declaration that it comes under the sovereignty of countries situated on the equator. Such exceptional treatment for this natural resource would pave the way to a solution for the work of the Legal Sub-Committee, since it would dispel the fears of many countries concerning the protection of their sovereignty over the respective segments of the geostationary orbit, a fear that has made it difficult for many of those countries to ratify the 1967 treaty on the use of outer space.

At no time has my delegation disregarded the 1967 treaty. We remain faithful to its letter and, above all, to its spirit, which was to prevent a struggle for the conquest of outer space for colonialist purposes. For my delegation the treaty retains its full validity, but it cannot be applied to the spatial ring which constitutes the orbit for the stationary satellites and for the fixed communications stations that they entail, because that spatial ring, that synchronic geostationary orbit of the earth, quite obviously falls within the sovereignty of certain States. To delay this recognition could well be prejudicial to relations among States and involve a threat to their sovereignty. Nor can we set aside the possibility that, in the absence of effective legislation, some States might be tempted to place stationary satellites in space over other States for specific political and military purposes. This undoubtedly, would constitute a violation of their sovereignty, and would also offer an opportunity, which doubtless would be immediately used by private, profit-seeking enterprises, to occupy those orbital segments in their own interests or in the interests of others. The permanent occupation of such segments could moreover open the way to obtaining ownership rights.

(Mr. Zea, Colombia)

The Legal Sub-Committee must bear in mind all these considerations, which go far beyond the area of law and concern political issues that are more difficult to deal with.

My delegation agrees with the extension of the time allotted to the Legal Sub-Committee to complete the work entrusted to it, but we request that the arguments advanced by Colombia in its various declarations be studied very carefully by the Sub-Committee. We also agree to the convening of a United Nations conference on outer space law. Moreover, we believe that there is an urgent need, and we so suggest, to expand the Committee on the Uses of Outer Space for Peaceful Purposes by the inclusion of other Member States representing not only other geographic regions but also different juridical and scientific positions on this subject. This extension is both necessary and urgent, since very few of the countries which exercise sovereignty over their geostationary orbit are members of the Committee; hence there are other countries that have not had an opportunity to express their views before the Committee on this vital question.

(Mr. Zea, Colombia)

I should like to reiterate my delegation's concern with the fate of this natural resource, the geostationary orbit, which, strangely enough, is under the sovereignty of developing countries alone. For this reason my delegation trusts that recognition of that sovereignty over such a resource will not be delayed under pretexts or for purposes that are unclear. For those countries this matter is of special interest, and it is for this reason that we are afraid that if we allow consideration of vital problems affecting countries with scarce resources to be interminably postponed, other rich nations or multinational enterprises may create irreversible situations and take up impregnable positions in this field that will destroy the right of the weaker countries.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Colombia for the congratulations and kind words he addressed to the Chairman and the other officers of the First Committee.

Mr. KATO (Japan): Mr. Chairman, since this is the first time my delegation has taken the floor in this Committee, I should like, first of all, to extend my delegation's sincere congratulations to Ambassador Jaroszek of Poland on his assumption of the Chairmanship of the First Committee. I am convinced that, thanks to his eminent leadership, this Committee will be able to achieve the important tasks entrusted to it by the General Assembly at its thirty-first session. The congratulations of my delegation go also to the Vice-Chairmen and the other officers of the Committee. I wish also to pay a well-deserved tribute to the distinguished Chairman of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space for the invaluable services he has rendered.

At the outset my delegation wishes to express its deep respect for the brilliant success of the United States of America in landing Viking I and Viking II on Mars. Such an outstanding achievement has been attained, I believe, through persistent effort and dedication on the part of the scientists and engineers concerned, through expert organizational and managerial capacity, together with the support of the whole programme by the Government and people of the United States. I came to realize this more vividly at a showing of the Mars photographs, with an explanatory lecture, which I had the pleasure of attending Monday, and for which I thank the United States Mission.

(Mr. Kato, Japan)

Looking back at the exploration activities in outer space in the latter half of the twentieth century, which began with the Soviet Union's successful launch of an artificial satellite in 1957, I cannot but express my admiration at the fact that so many noteworthy results have been attained in such a short time.

The voice of the first astronaut, Captain Gagarin, relayed from the vastness of outer space, was still echoing vividly in our ears, when in July 1969, astronauts Armstrong and Aldrin recorded their first historic steps on the surface of the moon; later, in October 1975, pictures of the surface of Venus were successfully transmitted to the earth, and in July and September of this year came another outstanding achievement with respect to Mars. In the eyes of future generations, I trust that the latter half of the twentieth century will be remembered as an epoch-making era, when mankind took one remarkable step after another into the outer space surrounding the earth.

With respect to the current undertakings to explore new frontiers for mankind, my delegation attaches great value to the role now being played by the United Nations, which is appropriate for an Organization that represents the world community. It is my firm belief that the role of the United Nations should be to create an environment where the development of science and technology can find smooth application in the international community.

Accordingly, my delegation notes with pleasure the significant progress made in the past year by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, with the benefit of the helpful work by the Legal Sub-Committee and the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee.

It is extremely gratifying and important that Members of the United Nations have understood the significance of the advances in science and technology in taking part in the deliberations on direct broadcasting satellites and remote sensing of the earth from space, and have endeavoured to resolve questions connected with the application of such new technologies.

As for direct broadcasting satellites, I should like to stress that large numbers of people in the world are already privileged to enjoy television broadcasts relayed by satellite, and that the technology of direct broadcasting satellites, once mastered, will give an overwhelmingly important facility to the

(Mr. Kato, Japan)

television broadcasting systems of the world. Needless to say, progress of this kind should not be discouraged, and all mankind is entitled to enjoy the result of such progress.

In this context, my delegation finds great satisfaction in the fact that the Legal Sub-Committee, after having concentrated its examination on international broadcasting, has agreed upon nine principles and has taken a decision not to formulate two principles concerning "spillover" and "disruption".

It cannot be overlooked, however, that there still are two most important and most difficult issues with respect to DBS, those of "consent" and "participation", which will require further examination next year. I hope that a constructive approach by every State shown this year will help overcome the difficulties involved in the principal remaining issues, and will lead to the successful establishment of draft principles.

With regard to remote sensing, I cannot over-emphasize the difficulty of assessing the extent of the possibilities that can be realized by this new technology. As was stated in the report of the Legal Sub-Committee, and as was explained by the distinguished Ambassador of the United States, remote-sensing data can be used not only for the discovery of mineral resources, but also in order to achieve practical results in a number of other fields. In this connexion, my delegation notes with satisfaction that the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee and the Legal Sub-Committee have performed valuable work in examining this question.

My delegation wishes also to welcome the fact that several ground stations have already been established, or are in the process of being established, and that data acquired by Landsat satellites, and made available to all interested States, are producing significant results.

(Mr. Kato, Japan)

My delegation understands the concern expressed by certain delegations over possible detrimental effects on the interests of the countries concerned from the improper use of data acquired by remote sensing satellites. But at the same time we should recognize the vast potentialities of this technology for the development of States, in particular the developing States, and we should not unduly fetter its application.

Therefore, it is our sincere hope that the two Sub-Committees of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space will take fully into account the usefulness of this pioneering technology and that in a few years their deliberations will show the way to overcome the difficulties we are now facing.

Consideration of the draft treaty relating to the moon is one of the important tasks entrusted to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. While noting that no outstanding results were attained at meetings of the Committee this year, my delegation wishes to express its sincere hope for the successful work of the Committee next year.

Although Japan has been making strenuous efforts to develop space technology, I must say that our achievements are far behind those of the leading space nations, especially the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. My country launched its first satellite in 1970, and now has eight satellites circling around the earth. But Japan's position in this field is among those nations whose technology is in the developing stage.

As one of the countries eager to develop their scientific and technological capacity in outer space -- an outstanding field which offers mankind hope and confidence and new perspectives on the twenty-first century -- Japan is convinced that United Nations efforts with regard to the peaceful uses of outer space are proving extremely useful and effective. My delegation is particularly appreciative of the fact that all decisions by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space are being taken on a consensus basis, thus avoiding sterile confrontations and engendering a spirit of international co-operation. My delegation is glad to participate in the work of the Committee and is determined to take as constructive an attitude as possible.

With reference to the draft resolution which will be submitted on Thursday, I am sure that it reflects the consensus reached on many points related to the questions before us. I wish to express my deep appreciation of the efforts that

(Mr. Kato, Japan)

have been made by the Austrian delegation. My delegation is co-operating with the Austrian delegation, and is ready to co-sponsor the draft resolution, which, I believe, will command the unanimous support of the General Assembly.

Before concluding, my delegation wishes to express its sincere appreciation to the members of the Outer Space Affairs Division in the Secretariat, and also to the expert, Mr. Murthy, for their excellent work during the past year.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Japan for the congratulations he addressed to the Chairman of the First Committee and to the other officers of the Committee.

Mr. SCALABRE (France) (interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman, taking the floor for the first time in this Committee at the thirty-first session of the General Assembly, the French delegation would like to convey its warmest congratulations to you and to the other officers of the Committee. We do not doubt that thanks to your outstanding qualities and your experience you will lead our work to a successful conclusion, and we pledge our entire co-operation to you.

During the past year French space activities have largely been conducted under the sign of international co-operation. The share of our bilateral or regional expenditures has been considerably higher than in past years, thus confirming a trend begun earlier. Beyond the traditional co-operation of France with the United States and the Soviet Union, co-operation whose quality we have appreciated once more, beyond the common action undertaken by European States and which has been reflected in a considerable participation by France in the major programmes of the European Space Agency, France took steps to increase the number of treaties and programmes of assistance and exchanges with a growing number of developing countries. This increase in co-operative space activities has not prevented a parallel development in the French national programme, which also included a number of interesting activities.

I will not tax the patience of this Committee by detailing these activities, which were duly reported at the last session of the Outer Space Committee. Rather, in connexion with the legal framework of this international co-operation I will recall that France last year ratified three specific conventions which on certain points crystallized the principles set by the general 1967 treaty on the peaceful

(Mr. Scalabre, France)

uses of outer space. In view of the importance we attach to these conventions, and particularly to the Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space, we express the hope that a growing number of States will adhere to these instruments and will ratify them.

My delegation notes with satisfaction, from the report we have before us, that the work carried out during the year by the two Sub-Committees has been fruitful, and we congratulate their Chairmen, Ambassadors Wyzner and Mishra. Particularly striking has been the progress made in the study of the question of remote sensing of the earth's resources. Two main reasons seem to us to explain the success. The first is undoubtedly the remarkable spirit of co-operation and compromise manifested by all delegations. The second reason concerns the method of work followed, which has always consisted in bringing out common views before proceeding gradually and cautiously to a consideration of differences. Thus a consensus has emerged on basic definitions both in the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee and in the Legal Sub-Committee. Moreover, several principles or summaries of common views have been drafted; these will constitute the basis for the work to be done next year, which should enable us to define the ways and means of applying the principles of national sovereignty and participation in remote-sensing activities. In this connexion, the distinction that the Legal Sub-Committee has begun to draw between data proper and information seems to us to be promising for the future.

(Mr. Scalabre, France)

As regards direct television broadcasting, the progress of work seems to us to have been equally satisfactory. Of course next year a consensus will have to be arrived at on the question of prior consent. This is a delicate task but, as we have often pointed out, we are not particularly concerned with points of terminology in this connexion. What we deem essential is setting up a procedure ensuring the mutual agreement of States concerned by direct television activities, because these involve the cultural, moral and spiritual values of peoples and individuals. While France traditionally ranks freedom as the first of the principles that should govern societies, it has always thought that the countries and bodies that can establish and operate direct television broadcast satellites should commit themselves, within a bilateral framework, to respect certain minimum rules in order to prevent abuses that might victimize the smallest and least developed countries.

Having clearly expressed the satisfaction of France concerning the real progress made on the two most important questions on the Committee's agenda, my delegation will once again express its regret that the Legal Sub-Committee has not been able to devote more time to questions pertaining to the definition or delimitation of outer space. As we see it, this is not an academic question. Rather it is of definite and renewed importance because there are potential legal, practical and political risks in failing to define the sphere of application of space law. If we wish to deal with this question both responsibly and in depth, we must, in future, give it sufficient priority, not, of course, by substituting it for one of the other priority items on the agenda, but by including it as soon as one of those items has been finally disposed of.

My delegation would now like to draw the attention of the Committee to paragraph 74 of the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. At its nineteenth session, the Committee decided to request the General Assembly to consider, during its current session, and on the basis of the report of the Fifth Committee, the possibility of adopting the system applied for meetings of the sub-committees, namely, that of alternate sessions in Geneva and New York. This seems to us to be the only solution capable of striking a wise and equitable balance between the various concerns of Member States.

Finally, may I reiterate my delegation's confidence in and gratitude towards the Chairman of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, Mr. Jankowitsch, without whom the work on this subject could not have been carried out as seriously and as thoroughly as it was.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of France for the kind words he addressed to me and to the other officers of the First Committee.

Mr. ROSE (German Democratic Republic): Permit me first of all cordially to congratulate Mr. Jaroszek on behalf of the delegation of the German Democratic Republic on his election as Chairman of the First Committee of the thirty-first session of the General Assembly. We note with particular pleasure and satisfaction that he has taken the chair in this important Committee, as a representative of a neighbouring country with which we are fraternally linked. We are sure that under his leadership and thanks to his diplomatic knowledge and rich experience it will be possible to fulfil the important tasks assigned to this Committee.

At the same time we should like to extend our congratulations to you, as our vice-chairman, as well as to all the other officers of the Committee, and to wish them success. You may count on the active co-operation of our delegation.

Further remarkable progress has been made in the peaceful exploration and uses of outer space since the thirtieth session of the United Nations General Assembly. My country followed with particular attention the successful mission of Salyut 5 of the Soviet Union, the transmission of instructional television programmes by satellite to many places in India and the exploration of Mars with the aid of the Viking I and Viking II sonds of the United States.

Besides these and other successful outer space activities, we welcome the conclusions of the International Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO) conference on the establishment of an international maritime satellite system (Inmarsat), the implementation of which will remarkably improve ship-to-shore voice communication between vessels and the continent.

The German Democratic Republic has also continued and extended its activities in the exploration of outer space. In co-operation with the Soviet Union and the other socialist States, we are offered great possibilities in the Intercosmos programme. In July of this year -- as already mentioned by the representative of the USSR as well as by other representatives of socialist countries -- a new agreement was concluded among the States involved which aims at the extension of friendly, fraternal and equitable relations in the development of international co-operation in the exploration and uses of outer space. In implementing this agreement, the Soviet Union proposed the participation of citizens from other member States in future manned flights of Soviet spaceships and space stations. The German Democratic Republic will make use of this opportunity.

(Mr. Rose, German Democratic Republic)

A good example of socialist co-operation in the exploration and uses of outer space was the successful mission of Soyuz 22, and we should like to extend our most warm congratulations to the delegation of the Soviet Union on this success.

Compared with earlier spaceships of the Soyuz type, spaceship Soyuz 22 has one particularity. A special photo section equipped with a multispectral camera, MKF-6, was docked to the space vehicle. The camera was designed by scientists of the German Democratic Republic and the Soviet Union, and manufactured in the German Democratic Republic by Carl Zeiss, Jena. It permits -- with the help of a high resolving power -- the simultaneous photographing of the surface of the earth in six different spectral ranges, among them four within the visible light and two in the near infra-red range. It produces, on highly sensitive special films, territorial sections sized about 115 km x 165 km at an altitude of 250 km to 260 km. The synthesis of the pictures is reached with the help of a multispectral projector, MSP 4, developed within the same programme.

This joint cosmic experiment has contributed to further improving means and methods of the exploration of the natural resources of the earth. The established scientific findings will benefit the national economies of both countries. They show again that the exploration of outer space leads more and more to immediately usable practical results.*

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* The Chairman took the Chair.

(Mr. Rose, German Democratic Republic)

Permit me further to mention some examples of the common outer space programme in which the German Democratic Republic took an active part: On board the Soviet meteorological satellite "Meteor" is an infra-red Fourier spectrometer for remote sensing of the atmosphere, which was developed in our country. The data stored by the satellite in circling the earth are received by ground stations of the Soviet Union and the German Democratic Republic and immediately processed with the help of electronic computers. The results gained in exploring the atmospheric concentration of carbon dioxide, water vapour, ozone and the dependence of temperature and water vapour concentration on the altitude as well as data concerning atmospheric matter permit the meteorological services to prepare the numerical weather forecast and further to increase the reliability of weather forecasting.

The German Democratic Republic is participating in the development of a universally usable and uniform digital telemetrical system which was tested in the satellite experiment Intercosmos 15.

Intercosmos 16 tests the physical processes on the sun. The German Democratic Republic takes part in this experiment with instruments to measure ultraviolet rays in two wavelength ranges.

Already 10 years ago the United Nations General Assembly unanimously approved by resolution 2222 (XXI) the treaty on principles governing the activities of States in the exploration and use of outer space.

This treaty has stood its test in international life. It was the basis for many bilateral and multilateral agreements. Its major concern is to develop co-operation among States which contributes to the strengthening of peace and international security, and to make the free exploration and uses of the moon and other celestial bodies a general principle. Also in the future the activities of the United Nations in this field must be guided by these criteria.

The First Committee of the General Assembly has so far underlined in all relevant resolutions the necessity of the exclusively peaceful character of all outer space activities. We would welcome reaffirmation of this principle by the United Nations General Assembly at its thirty-first session.

(Mr. Rose, German Democratic Republic)

As far as the activity of the Committee on Outer Space and of its two Sub-Committees is concerned, the delegation of the German Democratic Republic considers that on the whole in 1976 progress has been made in the settlement of existing problems, which is reflected in the report presented by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. We endorse this report. At the same time we should like to thank Ambassador Jankowitsch and the Chairmen of the Sub-Committees for the comprehensive work they have done.

So far the Committee on Outer Space has elaborated four Conventions to which many States have acceded. That is, indeed, a successful record. In view of the further development and the wide applications of space technology the efforts for further legal regulations are increasing.

Our delegation holds the view that by elaborating nine draft principles for direct satellite television broadcasting as well as five draft principles for remote sensing of the earth from space the Legal Sub-Committee has performed an important task. Without doubt it has proved to be useful that the problem of remote sensing of the earth has been dealt with, according to its specific aspects, both in the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee and in the Legal Sub-Committee. This refers particularly to such difficult questions as the definition of the term "data from remote sensing" or the definition "natural resources of the earth". Although great efforts still have to be made to complete the draft principles for direct satellite television broadcasting and remote sensing of the earth, we can say that real progress has been achieved. It is necessary purposefully to continue the work in these two fields.

Referring to direct television broadcasting by satellite, we wish to reaffirm our position that legal regulations should be drawn up for international DBS, under which such broadcasting should be subject to prior approval by the receiving State. This is in conformity with the basic norms of international law and the principles laid down in the Final Act of Helsinki.

As regards the completion of the draft of a treaty relating to the moon, the delegation of the German Democratic Republic is not among those who take an "all-or-nothing" position. We hold the view that with a realistic approach by all States to the questions that still remain unsettled, the draft of the treaty relating to the moon can be completed in a short time.

(Mr. Rose, German Democratic Republic)

Therefore, my delegation proposes that, proceeding from the draft articles elaborated so far, the Legal Sub-Committee should consider once again to what extent certain issues in connexion with the treaty relating to the moon could be settled at a later date by a reviewing conference or by a separate treaty.

The Programme implemented by experts on space applications has been appreciated by the Committee. We should like to underline once again our appreciation to the expert, Mr. Murthy, for the results accomplished in implementing the programme within the limited funds of the United Nations. These results prove that by rational application of means, good co-ordination and thorough preparation of measures, an important contribution could be made to further dissemination of information on the usefulness of the applications of space technologies in different fields.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the distinguished representative of the German Democratic Republic, Ambassador Rose, for his very kind reference to the fraternal relations between our two countries, as well as his remarks addressed to the officers of the Committee and to me personally.

Mr. RYDBECK (Sweden): Mr. Chairman, the Swedish delegation joins other delegations in congratulating you warmly on your election as Chairman of this Committee. We are convinced that, under your experienced guidance, we will achieve positive results. I should also like to congratulate the other members of the Bureau. I want to assure you and them that you can count on the full co-operation of the Swedish delegation during the coming weeks, when this Committee will be dealing with many important but also very difficult questions.

I should also like to take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks to Ambassador Jankowitsch of Austria, the Chairman of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, for the outstanding work that he has performed and for the positive results which, under his guidance, that Committee is able to submit to us. I also want to extend our thanks to the Chairmen of the Sub-Committees, Ambassador Wyzner from Poland and Professor Carver from Australia, and also to express our appreciation of the excellent work done by the Outer Space Affairs Division, in particular the most valuable and thought-provoking reports and studies that the Division has presented to the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee this year.

The development of space technology is progressing at an extremely rapid pace and this year, like previous years, has been marked by significant events in this field.

The landing of the United States Viking spacecraft on Mars and its activities on the surface of that planet is a spectacular example of the present sophistication of space technology. I want to thank the United States delegation for its initiative the other day in enabling the First Committee to acquaint itself in detail with the Viking mission through the fascinating report given by Professor Sagan. The Soviet manned spaceship Soyuz 22 is another recent achievement. Many other space projects of the greatest interest have been carried out during the past year or are planned for the near future. They have been undertaken both by individual countries and on a bilateral or regional basis. Among the regional projects we note, in particular, the activities of the European Space Agency. The practical applicability of space technology becomes more and more evident. Projects are under way to use satellites in new and interesting fields. A highly interesting example of the possibilities of direct television

(Mr. Rydbeck, Sweden)

broadcasting from satellites is the Satellite Instructional Television Experiment, whereby programmes were broadcast to Indian villages. The Indian representative yesterday gave a most interesting report on this experiment. The Canadian communications technology satellite -- CTS -- launched this year is the first communications satellite to use the frequency band envisaged for future direct television broadcast satellites of the kind we are discussing in the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

The peaceful application of space technology is providing significant benefits to the world. No doubt it will do so even more in the future. The fruits of this technology must be shared by as many as possible. We believe, therefore, that these activities should be carried out with international co-operation and participation. Only in this way can the benefits be shared by all nations at every level of economic and scientific development.

In our view, the United Nations has a vital role to play in this field. Co-operative efforts should be stimulated and, wherever necessary, international regulations agreed upon. Sweden is taking a great and active interest in this work, and we believe there is much to be done to promote peaceful uses of space technology, especially for the benefit of developing countries.

We, together with many other countries, feel, however, a great sense of urgency in regard to the work of the Outer Space Committee in face of the extraordinary speed with which space technology is developing. We hope that the resolution which we are going to adopt and which will guide the work for the next year will reflect this sense of urgency in the mandates it gives to the Sub-Committees.

The United Nations programme on space applications is of great importance in stimulating the peaceful use of outer space. Remote sensing can be used as a means of improving development planning at both the national and international levels. An increased awareness of the potential of promising space techniques is of particular importance for the developing countries. Like other delegations here, we want to endorse the appreciation expressed in the report of the Outer Space Committee to the United Nations Expert on Space Applications for the effective manner in which he has implemented the United Nations programme with the limited funds at his disposal.

(Mr. Rydbeck, Sweden)

The United Nations space applications programme should be considerably expanded in order to increase knowledge in the developing countries of the use of space techniques, and we subscribe totally to what was said yesterday in this respect by the Indian representative.

A question of high priority on the agenda of the Outer Space Committee and of both its Sub-Committees is the solution of the problems posed by the use of the remote sensing technique. This item should be tackled with great urgency because the use of remote sensing is of direct relevance to the solution of pressing economic and environmental problems. There is ample proof of the great usefulness of remote sensing. I have already mentioned the importance that this technique can have for developing countries. But we cannot overlook the problems involved.

We should ensure that all can profit from the enormous benefits of remote sensing from space, but at the same time we must also establish safeguards against possible misuse of information that has been collected by means of remote sensing -- many countries, as we know, are deeply concerned about this possibility. It is essential to strike a balance between assuring the benefits and alleviating the concerns to which this challenging technique gives rise.

In the two Sub-Committees of the Outer Space Committee, the work this year has resulted in some interesting and promising achievements towards that end. I want to comment upon some of them.

Members of the Outer Space Committee have come to the conclusion that the United Nations could play some co-ordinating role in the field of remote sensing in the current experimental phase and, even more so, in the future operational phase.

In this context, I should like to express my delegation's appreciation to the Secretariat for the many valuable studies and reports it has prepared, among others "Feasibility study on a possible co-ordinating function for the United Nations in future operational activities in remote sensing from satellites" and its revised version, just published, which gives us useful and concrete suggestions as to the form that the United Nations co-ordinating role could take now and in the future.

(Mr. Rydbeck, Sweden)

The Legal Sub-Committee has now seriously started the drafting of principles that could guide activities in this field. New so-called "common elements" have been agreed upon which will form the basis for the drafting during next year. My delegation welcomes this achievement. We should like, however, to point out that the principles should not be formulated in such a way as to make it more difficult for this promising technology to develop, and we should also keep in mind that the organizational set-up of remote sensing could change in the future and that this might warrant particular consideration when we draft the principles.

It has become evident that the most crucial question in solving the problems to which the remote sensing technique gives rise is the dissemination of data to "sensing States", "sensed States" and "third States", respectively. Interesting proposals on how to deal with this have been put forward by the Soviet Union and Canada, among others, and we hope that we will be able in the next year further to study these. The report of the Legal Sub-Committee includes a list of questions from different delegations which, in our view, is of great interest, as it reflects the complexity of the problems that we have to solve in drafting the principles. These questions are a good illustration of the concern that many States feel.

I should also like once more to point out the importance of the organizational aspect, that is that different future organizational set-ups -- on a one-nation basis or on the basis of two or more nations or at the regional or international level -- will necessarily have different consequences on the flow of data dissemination which the legal principles should regulate.

(Mr. Rydbeck, Sweden)

Both in the Outer Space Committee and in its Sub-Committees my delegation has consistently underlined that the analysis and presentation of this complicated subject should be structured and organized in a systematic way so that the various aspects can be better understood and possible solutions be studied in the relation to each stage. We are satisfied that this has been reflected in the different reports.

My delegation would also like to stress, as we have done so many times in the two Sub-Committees and the Committee itself, the importance of the co-ordination between the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee and the Legal Sub-Committee. We are satisfied that the Committees' report underlines that the questions relating to remote sensing requires particular attention from the point of view of co-ordination of activities between the two subsidiary bodies of the Outer Space Committee.

During her speech in the General Assembly on 13 October my Foreign Minister stressed that we must devote much more attention and greater resources to the development of alternative sources of energy. In this context I would like to note with great appreciation the work that in the framework of the Outer Space Committee has been done in the field of solar energy through space technology by Austria and Argentina and also by the Secretariat.

I now turn to the question of direct television broadcasting. After many years of sometimes difficult work aimed mainly at clarifying the various concepts involved, the Legal Sub-Committee has been able to start actual drafting of principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting. We are very satisfied to note that the Sub-Committee now has agreed on nine principles. However, the most important and also the most difficult question remains to be solved -- that is the relationship between the broadcasting and the receiving States. This question is quite essential and it must be solved. Otherwise, we risk to meet with the situation that was so correctly described by the Canadian representative the other day. He said that in the absence of an agreed international legal régime, direct television broadcasting from satellites to foreign countries will be a new source of controversy and potential conflict to add to those we already have on earth.

(Mr. Rydbeck, Sweden)

Canada and Sweden put forward a proposal, the first time in 1973, with the aim to find a middle way between opposing views. It tries to take care of the need felt by most States for some kind of regulation concerning direct broadcasting satellites aimed at foreign audiences, and at the same time not to be contrary to the principle of freedom of information. The core of the Canadian-Swedish proposal is "consent and participation". According to this approach, prospective television broadcasters intending to use satellites for direct broadcasting to receivers in other States should be subject to some sort of authorization by the receiving State, similar to the licensing procedures that are required to establish domestic television broadcasting systems in any of our countries. We sincerely believe that this proposal is the most realistic way to achieve a compromise. We certainly cannot find that consent for the establishment of a system for direct television broadcasting via satellite to a foreign country is incompatible with the principle of freedom of information, not any more than domestic licensing is regarded as contrary to that principle. The propcsal says "consent to the establishment of a system, not consent to individual programmes". Participation is the other component of the Canadian-Swedish proposal. This means consultations and negotiations. Decisions must be taken bilaterally, through consultations, on how best to organize the system of authorization or licensing. Such a diversity of situations will be encountered throughout the world that one single rule for that procedure cannot be worked out, but must be agreed upon on a case-to-case basis.

We now have a unique opportunity to establish an international order for direct broadcasting television satellites before any "faits accomplis" have created additional obstacles. It is therefore of crucial importance that the work on the principles governing the use by States of direct broadcast satellites should be completed in 1977. We do believe that real possibilities to achieve this exist.

The CHAIRMAN: I would like to express to the representative of Sweden my thanks and those of the other officers of the Committee for his very kind words addressed to us.

(The Chairman)

Before calling on the next speaker on my list I would like to inform the Committee that we have among us important visitors this afternoon, namely, Aleksey Leonov and Valery Kubosov, two Soviet cosmonauts who took part in the first international expedition to outer space in the Soyuz-Apollo. On behalf of the Committee I should like to extend to the two eminent cosmonauts our most cordial welcome and to congratulate them on their achievements in the conquest of outer space for the benefit of mankind. Aleksey Leonov has kindly agreed to say a few words of greeting on behalf of himself and his Soviet colleague and if the Committee agrees I would like to give him the floor for a few minutes. I see no objection and call Comrade Aleksey Leonov to address the Committee.

Mr. LEONOV (interpretation from Russian): Comrade Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, comrades, may I express to our distinguished comrade Chairman our most profound satisfaction for inviting us to participate in this meeting of the First Committee at the thirty-first session of the United Nations General Assembly. We are particularly pleased to take part in this meeting, since the First Committee is now discussing questions of international co-operation in the field of the exploration and uses of outer space for peaceful purposes which are of great importance to all mankind and to all States Members of the United Nations. We are most happy to have been able to participate in the first international Soyuz-Apollo expedition into outer space. It is no accident that in the space flight on the space ship Soyuz the blue flag of the United Nations was raised during the space orbit. During our meeting in orbit, this flag was handed over to the American crew and it was returned to earth on the space ship Apollo. We recall the moving moment of our meeting with the United Nations Secretary-General when the Soviet-American crew transmitted this symbol of peace to Kurt Waldheim. With this international manned space flight, a new page of co-operation in outer space was opened.

Today outer space is not only a field of scientific research but also a field for solving purely practical problems relating to the achievement of world radio and television communications, meteorological information, research into the earth's resources, control over the pollution of the environment, the seas and the oceans. Indeed the possibilities for the peaceful uses of outer space are boundless.

(Mr. Leonov)

But in order to solve these issues more effectively, countries should combine their efforts, regularly exchange information and to work out jointly and develop new projects pertaining to the exploration of outer space. A striking example of this is the Soviet-American space flight under the Soyuz-Apollo programme. We are profoundly convinced that this flight marked the first step in broad international co-operation in the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space.

In July this year the States participants in the Intercosmos programme concluded an intergovernmental Agreement on Co-operation in the Exploration and Uses of Outer Space for Peaceful Purposes providing inter alia for joint manned space flights of space craft on board which cosmonauts of the USSR and other socialist countries will travel. The first candidates for the flight will arrive in the USSR in November 1976 to go through training for the space flight. An Intercosmos delegation has arrived in the United States to conduct talks on further co-operation in the area of manned space flights.

We are profoundly convinced that outer space should be a field for peaceful co-operation among all nations. May I convey to the members of the Committee our wishes for the greatest success in solving this question, so important to all mankind.

The CHAIRMAN: On behalf of the First Committee I should like to express to General Aleksey Leonov our most sincere thanks for his address of greetings to us and to wish him many further successes and also to his colleague Mr. Valery Kubosov in their further endeavours towards the peaceful conquest and peaceful uses of outer space.

Mrs. GBUJAMA (Sierra Leone): At this first opportunity, my delegation would like to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on your election, and to express similar sentiments to the other officers of the Committee. Let me also express my delegation's satisfaction at the way the affairs of this Committee have been conducted so far; we are sure that under your continued guidance our efforts will achieve the desired results. The Sierra Leone delegation pledges its full co-operation to you and your colleagues.

As a member of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, the Sierra Leone delegation would like to associate itself fully with the Committee's report, which its Chairman, Mr. Jankowitsch, very ably presented on behalf of the Committee. In our view this report represents another important step towards the common goal of achieving workable guidelines in our co-operative efforts to exploit outer space for peaceful purposes.

Before commenting on the report, we take this opportunity to pay a tribute to some of the pioneer countries of space exploration, among them the United States, the USSR, Canada, the United Kingdom, France and India, which have devoted their technology and resources to exploit outer space for the peaceful use of all mankind. We are sure that, with their continued co-operation and dedication, these explorations should go a long way to fulfilling the economic, social and educational aspirations of the world in general and of the developing countries in particular.

In the process of space exploitation, however, my delegation believes that we should not ignore the importance of the territorial sovereignty of States over their lands and natural resources. The principle of prior consent should therefore constitute part of the principles to be carefully examined by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space in its future deliberations.

Commenting very briefly on the Committee's report, my delegation notes that a great deal of work has been done by the Committee and its subsidiary bodies, and welcomes the progress made by the Legal Sub-Committee in the elaboration of principles to govern the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting in accordance with General Assembly resolutions. In particular, we believe that the formulation of the nine principles governing direct television broadcasting by means of satellites constitutes significant progress.

(Mrs. Gbujama, Sierra Leone)

No less important is the conclusion of five draft principles and the identification of three new common elements by the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee on the question of remote sensing of the earth from space.

My delegation would like to urge the Sub-Committee during its next session to press on and seek a satisfactory solution to the many other no less important issues on which there are now divergent views. It is necessary to observe that, although the technology of remote sensing can contribute very significantly to our national development, there should be adequate guarantees against its misuse, as stated earlier. In effect, there should be strict guidelines to prevent sensed countries from being liable to exploitation and at the same time to allow them to enjoy the full advantages of remote sensing. Careful consideration should be given to the legal, organizational and technical implications in the dissemination of data to sensed countries. It is therefore essential to all that a set of guidelines to regulate broadcasting by satellite from one State to another should be agreed upon.

Greater co-operation among States in the exploitation of space technology is of extreme importance to us, because we are convinced that developing countries like Sierra Leone can derive immense benefit from such co-operation for the development of their resources.

And at this point I am happy to state that the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), in conjunction with my Government, has embarked upon remote sensing activities with a view to improving the forest and fishery industries of Sierra Leone.

My delegation fully supports the suggestion to convene a United Nations conference on outer space as soon as practicable. Such a conference will provide an opportunity for more extensive discussions of all the issues involved than is now possible. If such a conference is to be convened, however, we would expect that adequate preparations be made to ensure its success.

As a member of the Committee on Outer Space, my delegation will be very pleased to co-sponsor the draft resolution which is expected to be introduced by the representative of Austria. We are convinced that this resolution will provide the necessary ideal conditions and open the way for further progress in international co-operation in outer space exploitation.

(Mrs. Gbujama, Sierra Leone)

My delegation supports the view that the United Nations Space Applications Programme should be extended both in its contents and scope. Along with this we would like to urge that more financial provision be made available to ensure that its operations are of the highest possible standard, as long as those who are actively engaged in space exploration do not lose sight of the fact that they do have other no less important commitments to fulfil, particularly the economic development of the third world countries.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Sierra Leone for her kind remarks addressed to the officers of the Committee and to me personally.

Mr. JOENNIEMI (Finland): Since my delegation takes the floor in this Committee for the first time, I would like to congratulate you most warmly upon your election to your high office. My delegation is pleased to work under your leadership and I wish you all success in your important work.

My country, although not a member of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space of the United Nations, has followed the work of that Committee with the utmost interest and attention for several years. During previous sessions of the United Nations General Assembly we have not actively participated in the debates in this Committee on the item now before us.

In view of the fact that the Outer Space Committee now has reached the final stages of its work on a number of important issues, my delegation would like to take this opportunity to express its satisfaction with the progress achieved by the Committee in its efforts to elaborate guiding principles for the present and future uses of outer space, and to make some general comments with respect to certain issues of essential importance for the successful continuation of the Committee's work.

My delegation fully shares the belief expressed by previous speakers that the development of effective international co-operation with respect to the peaceful uses of outer space is a field of vast importance to all nations of the international community and, as such, eminently suited for the United Nations. The rapid advancement of space technology and the broadening spectrum of its applications in such areas as environmental research and cultural and educational exchange, makes it abundantly clear that we are dealing with a concern common to all mankind, notwithstanding national disparities with respect to the technical know-how needed for space research. In our view, the United Nations has met the challenge well. A glance at the various topics occupying the Outer Space Committee, its two Sub-Committees and the working groups established by them, will suffice to indicate the broad range of space-related issues dealt with by the United Nations, and a study of the many reports prepared by these and related bodies are ample proof of the care and diligence with which the exploration and development of international co-operation in the field of the peaceful uses of outer space has been approached. My delegation also extends its warmest congratulations to the members of the Outer Space Committee and its subsidiary organs for their excellent work.

(Mr. Joenniemi, Finland)

Turning now to the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session (Supplement No. 20, (A/31/20)), my delegation notes that important progress has been achieved with respect to two items, which have been considered as matters of high priority by the Legal and Scientific and Technical Sub-Committees. The items I am referring to are the elaboration of draft principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting with a view to concluding an international agreement or agreements, considered by the Legal Sub-Committee, and the study of the legal implications as well as the technical aspects and practical applications of remote sensing of the earth by satellites, considered by both Sub-Committees respectively. Let me state briefly the basic position of my delegation with regard to the issues involved.

First of all, my delegation would like to associate itself with those delegations who have emphasized the importance of direct television broadcasting as a new means for sharing knowledge and cultural values among nations. It is our firm conviction that this new method of communication will make an important contribution to the fulfilment of the spiritual and material needs of mankind, the attainment of social justice and the strengthening of world peace. We look forward to the employment of direct television broadcasting particularly for educational purposes and we are sure that it will thus increase mutual understanding between individuals and nations. In the elaboration of an international legal framework for direct television broadcasting systems as well as in their future establishment and use, attention should be paid to the cultural identity and interests of small nations and developing countries. These goals can only be reached by structuring international broadcasting activity by satellites upon widely-based international co-operation in accordance with the goals and principles of the United Nations. The possibilities of United Nations bodies, such as the UNESCO, in the safeguarding and development of education and national cultures in this respect should also be kept in mind.

(Mr. Joenniemi, Finland)

We note with satisfaction that the thoughts just mentioned have been observed to a large extent in the set of draft principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting, nine of which have been formulated by the Outer Space Committee in its session this year. A generally acceptable solution, however, has not yet been found to certain vital questions, at present embodied in three tentative draft principles: Consent and Participation, Programme Content and Unlawful/Inadmissible Broadcasts (Report of the Legal Sub-Committee on the work of its fifteenth session, document A/AC.105/171, Annex II). My delegation wishes to emphasize the importance of reaching a generally acceptable solution, taking into account the principles concerning the freer and wider dissemination of information, and cultural and educational exchange, embodied in the Final Act of the Conference on European Co-operation and Security, as well as the right of each sovereign State to regulate the goals and guidelines of broadcasting within its territory. In this connexion, my delegation would support a solution along the lines envisaged in the working papers submitted jointly by Canada and Sweden. We feel that an orderly development of direct broadcasting technology -- as well as avoidance of its abuse -- is best served by principles requiring that direct television broadcasts intended specifically for certain States be commenced only upon and as a result of consultations between receiving States and the broadcasting State.

(Mr. Joenniemi, Finland)

Another item which is of concern to the international community as a whole is remote sensing of the earth from space. My delegation attaches great importance especially to the legal implications of remote sensing by satellites, bearing in mind that, even though very few nations possess the necessary technology for such activity, all countries are apt to become subjected to it.

In our opinion, it is essential that consensus be reached with respect to the legal principles that will form the basis of remote sensing activity, and that every effort is made to draft an international document on mutually agreed principles for international remote sensing of the earth from space as soon as possible.

In this connexion, the consensus reached in the Legal Sub-Committee, this year, on five principles safeguarding respect for and observance of the interests of all nations, especially those of developing nations, international law and the demands of the protection of the environment as well as the establishing of the basic equality of nations with respect to access to remote sensing data and mutual technical assistance on international and regional levels, is of great value for the continued work. My delegation hopes that the three "common elements" defined by the Legal Sub-Committee this year, could find expression in legal formulae during the next session of the Committee for the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

Further, my delegation is of the opinion that the interests of a well-defined international legal framework for remote sensing of the earth from space are best served by an international convention rather than a declaration on the subject-matter. My delegation also believes that orderly management of future operational activities, and the avoidance of abuses in this respect, would best be achieved by a suitable form of international administration and control, for instance, under the auspices of the United Nations. International administration of remote sensing activities would greatly facilitate multilateral co-operation in this field and counteract the emergence of possible conflict situations.

With regard to the problem of dissemination of remote sensing data, my delegation holds the belief that such data should be available, at least to sensed States, as soon as possible and at no or little cost. We also think that every effort should be made to render more effective the training in interpretation and use of remote sensing data, with a special emphasis on the needs of developing countries.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Finland for his kind words addressed to the Chairman of this Committee.

Mr. KITTANI (Iraq) (interpretation from Arabic): Mr. Chairman, the delegation of the Republic of Iraq is happy not to follow rule 110 and to congratulate you upon your election to the Chair of the First Committee for the current session. We also wish to congratulate very warmly the Vice-Chairmen and the Rapporteur for their respective elections.

The delegation of my country is in agreement with the positions taken by a large number of countries whose representatives have already taken the floor in respect of items 1 and 32 of the agenda of the General Assembly which have been allocated to this Committee for discussion. It is for this reason that the views which we shall express will be very brief and concise.

We have taken note of the considerable progress achieved by the two Sub-Committees, namely the Legal and Scientific and Technical Sub-Committees, in the year that has elapsed, each of these Committees in its field of competence and within the purview of matters allotted to them. The detailed report given to us by the Chairman of the Outer Space Committee, our friend Mr. Jankowitsch, when we began our consideration of this item and the interventions of the previous speakers make it unnecessary for us to dwell in detail on the work of these two Sub-Committees and on the results they have achieved, where they have arrived at agreement on some fundamental points whereas others have been left outstanding. But we wish to make some remarks.

Firstly, as regards the work of the Legal Sub-Committee on the treaty relating to the moon, my delegation is in favour of the idea of subjecting the natural resources of the moon to the principle of the common heritage of mankind. As for principles governing the use by States of artificial satellites for direct television broadcasting, the delegation of the Republic of Iraq believes that it is necessary to obtain the prior consent of receiving States in order to safeguard their sovereignty and independence.

Secondly, as regards the juridical implications of remote sensing, Iraq endorses the view according to which it is necessary to obtain the consent of the State concerned before undertaking remote sensing activities and before disseminating any information and providing it to third States. As regards the activities [illegible]

(Mr. Kittani, Iraq)

of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee in the field of remote sensing from outer space, we are happy to note that the Sub-Committee paid special attention to the role that can be played by the United Nations in the field of training, education, exchange of information and the creation of awareness within the context of these programmes. Firstly, we strongly support the idea of giving the United Nations a co-ordinating role in the field of remote sensing and we would wish the Committee on Outer Space and the two Sub-Committees to give the highest priority to this question.

The delegation of Iraq is in favour of the idea of extending the field of activities of the United Nations in the area of space applications. This programme should be strengthened financially in order to make it possible to provide the necessary technical assistance to developing countries in the area of the peaceful uses of outer space.

(Mr. Kittani, Iraq)

With regard to the possibility of convening a United Nations conference on outer space, we support the convening of such a conference at the earliest possible date and would like the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee to speedily adopt the necessary measures and approve the principles and rules which would make it possible to hold that conference. In our view, developing countries, in particular, need outer space data and information which has already been compiled or which could be compiled in the future, especially in connexion with the peaceful uses of outer space and the implications of that use for the development plans of those countries. In our view, the convening of a conference on outer space could represent an important turning-point in relation to this significant question.

We share the view of those delegations which feel it is necessary to strengthen the Outer Space Affairs Division in the United Nations and, in particular, support the recommendation of the Outer Space Committee to the Secretary-General that he should consider strengthening that Division so as to provide it with greater means to meet requests for assistance, especially from the developing countries.

The Republic of Iraq has this year entered the satellite era: in Baghdad, last April, we inaugurated a ground station within the context of Intelstat, and this ground station has begun to receive television programmes from and to establish links with other countries in the world by means of satellites.

Today we have great opportunities to use outer space for peaceful purposes, and in this connexion we should like to mention a general phenomenon that we believe is at the fore of the matters to which Member States should devote their attention. I might briefly describe this phenomenon as follows: at a time when everyone in the world can see that the dreams of the past are becoming a tangible x reality and States, particularly the developing countries, have realized the enormous possibilities looming on the horizon and the possible effects, whether positive or negative, of the uses of outer space on the life of their populations and their aspirations and development plans -- that is to say, the effects of the use of outer space on the economic order to be established -- we must note that it follows from the report of the Outer Space Committee that the last two decades of the twentieth century will witness revolutionary developments in the area of

(Mr. Kittani, Iraq)

space technology. We regret to note that international co-operation within the framework of the United Nations, and in the activities of the Committee in particular, is developing very slowly and in a manner compatible with the tremendous scientific progress which is expected in the very near future and in the remaining years of the twentieth century. This phenomenon is not confined to outer space alone but applies equally to most aspects of international co-operation -- that is to say, the most important aspects such as the law of the sea and the endeavours to establish a new international economic order. I would even say that this phenomenon is connected with the very survival of mankind on earth and the community in which man lives -- if man survives, that is. We invite all those interested in the peaceful uses of outer space, and in particular the members of the Committee, to take account of this reality and to redouble their efforts in order to expedite the conclusions of an agreement and the elaboration of the necessary rules to govern international co-operation in this crucial field.

In conclusion, we should like to refer to the need to review the composition of the Committee. The delegation of Iraq favours the enlargement of the Committee or the replacement of some of its members by other Member States, thus affording new States an opportunity to participate in its work, in order to make the Committee more dynamic, while respecting the need to ensure continuity in its work.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Iraq for his kind remarks addressed to the Chairman and the other officers of the Committee.

I have no further speakers on my list for this afternoon. On the other hand, for tomorrow there are more than 20 speakers inscribed. I would, therefore, ask if there is any representative inscribed for tomorrow who would be ready to speak this afternoon?

Since there is not, then I would appeal to all my colleagues for their kind co-operation in being punctual for tomorrow's meetings so that we can enable all representatives who are inscribed to speak tomorrow to do so and also, possibly, take a decision on the draft resolution before the end of the afternoon meeting.

(The Chairman)

The draft resolution, as the Committee is aware, has just been distributed. It will be introduced at the beginning of tomorrow morning's meeting by Ambassador Jankowitsch, and therefore if time permitted we could take a decision on it tomorrow afternoon or tomorrow evening, thus dispensing with the two meetings on Friday. That is why I appeal to all representatives to be punctual and especially to those inscribed to speak to be ready to do so when their turn comes.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.